

Information Note¹

- Events:** National Workshop on Enhancing the Implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) and Improving Biosafety and Biosecurity Frameworks in Suriname
- Organizers:** Hosted by the Government of Suriname in cooperation with the BWC Implementation Support Unit (BWC ISU), with financial support from the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
- Date and Venue:** 16 -17 March 2022, Paramaribo, Suriname
- Participants:** Representatives from Government Ministries of Suriname, including Defence, Health, Agriculture, Justice, Foreign Affairs, the Prosecutor's Office, Industry and Trade, and Customs
Representatives from the BWC ISU, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA – by video link)
1540 Committee Expert

Background

On 22 February 2022, the Chief of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) Implementation Support Unit (ISU) sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee (S/AC.44/2022/NOTE.12) inviting the 1540 Committee's Group of Experts to participate in an expert mission to Suriname and the Dominican Republic. As part of the expert mission, a Workshop took place on 16 and 17 March 2022 in Paramaribo, Suriname, focused on enhancing the implementation of the BWC, as well as identifying concrete steps to strengthen existing legislative frameworks, including considering the complementarity between the BWC and UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

This Workshop was of relevance to resolution 1540 (2004) and its follow-up resolutions as follows:

- Operative paragraph 1 of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) requires all States to refrain from providing any form of support to non-State actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery. Under operative paragraph 2 of the resolution all States are obliged to adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws prohibiting such activities by non-State actors on their territories. Operative paragraph 3 of resolution 1540 (2004) requires all States to take and enforce effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials.

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organizers or participants in the event.

- Operative paragraph 7 of resolution 1540 (2004) recognizes that some States may require assistance in implementing the provisions of the resolution. Operative paragraph 5 of resolution 1810 (2008) encourages States to convey assistance requests to the Committee. Resolution 2325 (2016) emphasizes the importance of providing States, in response to requests, with effective assistance that meets their needs.
- Operative paragraph 22 of resolution 2325 (2016) encourages the Committee to develop, in collaboration with international, regional and subregional organizations, assistance projects to support States in implementing resolution 1540 (2004) in order to facilitate the prompt and direct response to assistance requests;
- Operative paragraph 29 of resolution 2325 (2016) requests the 1540 Committee to continue to organize and participate in outreach events on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) at the international, regional, subregional, and as appropriate, national level.

Highlights

The Workshop was opened by H.E. Ms. Krishna Mathoera, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Suriname, who emphasised her country's commitment to the full implementation of obligations under international instruments related to weapons of mass destruction, including the BWC and resolution 1540 (2004). The Minister noted that this remained a challenging task given other pressing national priorities and emphasised that assistance from international partners is key to such endeavour. Minister Mathoera noted that a draft law on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is currently under consideration by Parliament and that Suriname intends to develop similar implementing laws covering nuclear and biological weapons.

Participants in the Workshop included 21 representatives from various Government authorities and institutions. The Workshop served as a platform to increase awareness among national stakeholders of the BWC and related obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) and to discuss the benefits, possible approaches and elements of national implementing legislation. It also provided an opportunity for national stakeholders to discuss the current status of implementation, challenges, assistance needs and plans for enhancing national implementation of Suriname's international obligations in the area of biological weapons and "related materials" and for international partners to provide information on available assistance programmes.

Additional Comments

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at 1540experts@un.org.